

CURRENT EDUCATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

THE Commission on The Library and Adult Education meeting October 20 and 21 in Chicago at the headquarters of the American Library Association, has issued the following statement:

The Commission on The Library and Adult Education has been greatly impressed by Dr. W. S. Learned's report on "The American public library and the diffusion of knowledge" (Harcourt; 1924). We have found it a study showing unusual acquaintance with our problems, an intimate knowledge of detail remarkable indeed in anyone not closely associated for years with library work. But we have found in Dr. Learned's report much more than familiarity with the present development of public libraries and the American Library Association. He has opened up vistas for us, avenues of possible achievement, new opportunities. His report has already inspired many of us to efforts in new fields and to new efforts in old lines. It will greatly aid us in forming that public opinion which alone will make these newer forms of library work possible.

The members of the Commission, further, as lovers of books, wish to express their pleasure and admiration for the fine way in which the report has been printed—a delight to the eye and a fitting dress for an inspiring work.

The library of the future, according to Dr. Learned, will be "a community intelligence service." It will include all the best that is being done in our reference departments, but it would also require a more highly specialized personnel which must "command all of the college teacher's familiarity with the literature of a strictly limited field, plus the power which the college teacher may and often does lack completely, namely—the power speedily to read his applicant's mental equipment and point of view, and to sense intuitively the character of his personal need. A community of the size, say of Akron, would have a staff of 20 or more specialists, whose business would be to make knowledge popular through books and by talks, lectures, and interviews. This staff would be the driving force in education."

MAKING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY EQUAL BY MAKING IT DIFFERENT

THE EDUCATION OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN, by John Louis Horn, New York: The Century Company. 1924. Pp. 343. \$2.00.

EDUCATION OF GIFTED CHILDREN, by Lula M. Stedman. Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Company. 1924. Pp. 192. \$1.80.

We are all agreed that children differ in ability; yet we go on blindly grouping them according to chronological age, setting practically the same goals for the moron that we do for the gifted! Mr. Horn offers the American public school a very definite program for the education of its exceptional children. He would eliminate from the regular public school the two extremes, the feeble-minded and the prodigies. The remaining 94% of the school population he would divide into three ability groups, the typical, the super-typical, and the sub-typical. He is opposed to rushing the super-typical child through the grades; he demands an enrichment of the usual subjects with the addition of stenography, instrumental music, and foreign languages. With these children reason should be emphasized and the rôle of habits decreased. On the other hand habit is the all-important factor with the sub-typical child. These habits should not only deal with skills, they should prepare for efficient social adjustment. To illustrate, the "behavior patterns" should include what to do with surplus funds, and what attitude to take in regard to patent medicines.

There is nothing undemocratic in this differentiation; the world is divided into those who "carry on" and those who "carry forward." If America persists in adjusting her training to the dull, to those who "carry on," she will commit national suicide. Civilization is the gift of the super-typical to the dull; how can they give without appropriate training? These are some of the reasons advanced by Mr. Horn for his program of differentiated education. You may

differ with him, but I do not believe you can disregard him. There is a "punch" to the book that stirs you into an aggressive attitude and makes you think.

In addition to the mentally exceptional child, Mr. Horn makes two other large groups, the temperamentally exceptional and the physically exceptional. Under the first he classes the truants, the incorrigibles, and the speech defectives. Under the second he classes the deaf, the blind, and the crippled. In each case he has made a careful study of current practice in American cities, and is prepared to give a constructive program.

This is the best general treatment that I know of the exceptional child in school. We are fast coming to a series of books, each dealing with one aspect of the problem. Such a book is Miss Stedman's most excellent account of her five years' experience in the opportunity room at the University of California, Southern Branch. After a general statement as to the purposes and plan of the opportunity room, Miss Stedman gives case descriptions of five types of gifted children. This is followed by a series of profile charts showing to what extent these children's achievement in school subjects paralleled their ability. When we remember that the bright children in the grades are often loafers, we are amazed to learn that these children came within 2% of the national standards for their *mental age*. But they were forced, you protest! No! The book is full of evidence to the contrary; there was no attempt to rush them through the grades, no intention to make "wonder children" of them. The usual school subjects were greatly enriched, and foreign languages were added. But the emphasis was on well-rounded personality; these children were not living to learn, but learning to live together.

Almost half of Miss Stedman's book is given to accounts of actual activities that these children engaged in. Among the more interesting of these activities the following

may be mentioned: writing poetry, pageants, and plays; giving illustrated lectures; publishing books; and preparing a report card to measure their progress in character habits.

Other new books dealing with the temperamentally exceptional child are now available. One of these, Miss Mateer's *The Unstable Child*, was reviewed in a recent issue of THE TEACHER. Two others concerned with the emotional life of the so-called normal child will be considered in an early number.

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THE CASE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OUR FAITH IN EDUCATION, by Henry Suzzallo, Philadelphia: J. P. Lippincott Company. 1924.

That our faith in public education should be commensurate with our belief in democratic government is the substance of the author's argument in this little volume of approximately one hundred pages. The successful working of democratic institutions depends upon the existence of the many of average ability who have been trained to follow intelligently, and of the few of exceptional talents who have been trained to lead wisely. The sole guarantee of this reciprocal leadership and followership, according to President Suzzallo of the University of Washington, is public education.

The book is the expanded form of an address delivered at Oakland, California, on July 4, 1923, before the American Council on Education and the National Education Association. The patriotic setting of the address is doubtless the reason that only the political outcome of education come in for treatment—to the total exclusion of an outcome equally as valuable, namely, the ability wisely to use and enjoy one's leisure. This central idea of the vital necessity, on political grounds, of educating every child in America, is hammered home on nearly every page, until by mere dint of repetition